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Trooper Makes Emergency Landing

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AMES, Iowa -- Iowa State Trooper Scott Pigsley was on his way back to Atlantic from Sioux City early Tuesday morning when his plane hit a flock of geese.



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Damage to wing after collision with geese.

The crash happened between midnight and 1 a.m.

Pictures of the plane show multiple dents on the wings, a broken wheel cover and blood on the outside of the aircraft.

"It was dark and all of the sudden I heard a big bang – the plane shook," said Pigsley.

Pigsley said he initially thought he was having engine problems in the dark he didn't see the flock of geese and couldn't immediately see the damage to his Cessna 182.

"Then I used a flashlight and started noticing damage to the aircraft," said Pigsley.

From what Pigsley could see of the damage to the right wing, landing gear and tail he knew it was significant enough that he wouldn't make it back to Atlantic so he made the decision to make an emergency landing at the Denison airport about 18 miles away.

"I landed as slow as I could in case that left wheel was damaged or pinned because if that's the case, it's going to skid and put me into a spin, so I

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tried to land as slow as possible," said Pigsley.

Pigsley has practice with emergency situations, landing an aircraft with engine trouble in 2006 in a field near Bondurant. In 2010, he made a similar landing right on Highway 44, near the Audubon and Guthrie County line.

"I may be experiencing more than most people, but with our training and as frequently as we fly, I'm more comfortable and able to deal with it when a situation has arisen," said Pigsley.

Encountering flocks of geese is one such situation that Pigsley said all pilots train for because it can often be a problem.

"Especially in the spring and the fall when the migratory birds are moving it can happen and it has happened," said Pigsley.

Pigsley was not hurt in the incident.

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